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## **Question Time: Talking to children about Santa**

**How did your parents do it? How do you?**

**By Rob Burgess**  
**Tribune night editor**

[**Spoiler alert:** Frank talk about Santa ahead. Decide if this is for you before proceeding.]

Every parent faces the same dilemma around this time of year. And that is the conundrum of what to tell your children about Santa Claus.

So, we wanted to know: “What did your parents tell you about Santa? What do/did/will/would you tell your children about Santa? What would you hope your children tell their children about Santa? Explain the reasoning behind each.”

### **YOUR ANSWERS**

“I am poor, therefore, I refuse to give anyone/anything else credit. My son knows that we (me and my husband) buy his presents and we tell him to say 'thank you' and give us a hug. My husband works hard for his money. More than anything, he deserves the credit.” — **Kisha Scott**

“Santa is real.” — **Terry Yazdani**

“My parents were always open about the fact that Santa was a mythical character, based on St. Nicholas and the desire to spread joy in the Christmas season. They did not want my siblings and I to suffer the disappointment that comes with disillusionment. We did however, enjoy reading about the different Santa traditions and stories from around the world. I am planning to take the same route. For me, it is about maintaining my children's trust and a family environment that doesn't encourage secrets. I don't ever want my children to feel I would be dishonest with them for sport. I will respect whatever my children decide to tell their children about Santa; I hope that they will feel as I do, that not believing in Santa did not deprive them. I have always had a feeling of great joy and excitement at Christmas time, and my wish is for my children and grandchildren to have that as well.” — **Ash Burgess**

## **OUR ANSWERS**

“Who's Santa?” — **Josh Sigler**

“I wish I had told my daughter the truth from the beginning. Christmas would have been just as enjoyable, and I never would have had to explain that I systematically lied to her because it's cute when children believe in magic.” — **Steve Mullen**

“For my brother Chris and me, our parents definitely played the Santa story as being real for the first few years of our lives. They slowly let us come to

the realization it was a farce as time went on. I don't remember the exact moment I figured out the game, but I do remember one instance sticking with me. I observed to them that our house at the time had an electric fireplace instead of an actual one with a chimney. I asked how Santa would be infiltrating our dwelling without this opening. In a moment of improv, they told me he would be shrinking himself and coming in through the electric wiring. This struck me as odd. And, while every other part of the story should have tipped me off, this gave me pause. I don't resent them for this, but I'm sure I would have had just as good a time, or maybe even better, if I had known the truth all along. For the other two questions, I co-sign what Ash said." — **Rob Burgess**

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